

Message Text

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11
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 SAM-01 ACDA-07 ERDA-05 AID-05

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O R 070615Z AUG 76 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE
INFO AMCONSUL LAHORE IMMEDIATE
SECSTATE IMMEDIATE 7022
AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 8212

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)
SUBJECT: SECVISIT-PRESS PLAY

1. FOREIGN SECRETARY AGHA SHAHI, IN A BACKGROUNDER GIVEN TO THE LOCAL PRESS AT THE MFA WHICH RECEIVED FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE IN ALL AUGUST 7 PAPERS, DISCUSSED TOPICS THE PM AND THE SECRETARY WOULD PROBABLY COVER DURING THE LATTER'S VISIT TO PAKISTAN.

2. QUOTING "OFFICIAL SOURCES" THE PAPERS NOTED THE TWO ARE EXPECTED TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON "RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REGION, BILATERAL RELATIONS, THE CRISIS IN LEBANON AND THE WORLD SITUATION." SINCE THE SECRETARY IS "A WORLD STATESMAN WHO IS HELD IN HIGH ESTEEM HERE", THE PM WILL BE INTERESTED IN HIS REACTIONS TO THE STEPS TOWARD NORMALIZATION ON THE SUBCONTINENT.

3. DURING BACKGROUNDER, SHAHI WAS ASKED ABOUT REPROCESSING ISSUE. PRESS NOTES THAT "OFFICIAL SOURCES SHOT DOWN
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INSPIRED SPECULATION THAT KISSINGER WAS GOING TO RAISE

THE QUESTION OF THE REPROCESSING PLANT PAKISTAN HAS BOUGHT FROM FRANCE. IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT PAKISTAN'S POSITION WAS QUITE CLEAR AND FIRM. NEGOTIATIONS HAD BEEN GOING ON FOR FOUR YEARS, AN AGREEMENT HAD BEEN SIGNED, AND THERE IS NO QUESTION OF GOING BACK ON IT." ARTICLES ADDED THAT SPECULATION HAD ARISEN BECAUSE, "ACCORDING TO AMERICAN PRESS REPORTS", WASHINGTON HAD TRIED TO PERSUADE FRANCE FROM GOING AHEAD WITH THE SALE.

4. ON ARM SALES, PRESS REPORTS STATE "THE PROCESS IS PROCEEDING SMOOTHLY, ALTHOUGH PAKISTAN WOULD LIKE IT TO BE ACCELERATED." SHAHI WENT ON TO SAY THE CAUSE FOR DELAY IS LEGISLATION INVOLVING CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL, AND THE "AMERICAN GOVERNMENT ITSELF" CONSIDERED SUPPLY OF URGENTLY NEEDED WEAPONS TO PAKISTAN AS ESSENTIAL TO REGIONAL SECURITY.

5. IN OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO RECENT PREVIOUSLY UNPUBLICIZED IMBROGLIO OVER UNFOUNDED CHARGES THAT ONE OF OUR FORMER CONSULATE OFFICERS HAD BECOME INVOLVED IN DOMESTIC PAKISTANI POLITICS, AGHA SHAHI NOTED THAT "AN ODD MINOR IRRITANT OR TWO, SUCH AS THE INJUDICIOUS CONDUCT OF DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL, CAN ALWAYS BE SMOOTHED OUT BY THE TWO LEADERS WHO ALREADY HAVE A DEEP PERSONAL RAPPORT." WE ARE NOT SURE WHY SHAHI BROUGHT UP THIS MINOR EPISODE WHICH WAS SETTLED SATISFACTORILY SOME WEEKS AGO, BUT WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT BHUTTO WOULD NOT RAISE THIS WITH THE SECRETARY.

6. SHAHI'S COMMENTS ON STATE OF US/PAK RELATIONS WERE GENERALLY POSITIVE. HE SPOKE OF "MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND EQUALITY" AND THE "EXCELLENT RELATIONS" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

IN A CLEAR SIGNAL GIVING MFA VIEW ON HOW KISSINGER/BHUTTO TALKS SHOULD PROCEED, SHAHI SAID "EVEN ON MATTERS WHERE WE HAVE DIFFERENT VIEWPOINTS, IT IS MORE DESIRABLE TO ENGAGE IN A SENSIBLE AND LOGICAL DIALOGUE WITH A VIEW TO FINDING A CONSENSUS AND NARROWING THE SCOPE OF DIFFERENCES THAN HARPING ALOUD ON THEM."
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